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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/816,179	03/23/2001	Jeffrey Alan Meaden		7594
7590	12/23/2003		EXAMINER	
Gero G. McClellan Thomason, Moser & Patterson, L.L.P. Suite 1500 3040 Post Oak Boulevard Houston, TX 77056-6582			RIMELL, SAMUEL G	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2175	4
			DATE MAILED:	12/23/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	MEADEN, JEFFREY ALAN
Examiner Sam Rimell	Art Unit 2175

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) Claim(s) 10-22 is/are allowed.
6) Claim(s) 1,2,5 and 7 is/are rejected.
7) Claim(s) 3,4,6,8 and 9 is/are objected to.
8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____

- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____

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SAM RIMELL
PRIMARY EXAMINER

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Baisley (U.S. Patent 6,502,112).

Claim 1: Baisley discloses a method which involves the sorting of two document. The content of each document is readable as a list, given that the claims do not define what the list actually contains. A processing system compares each of the documents, with comparison involving a sorting steps 22 or 26 performed on each document.

The documents are not sortable in their default format by reason that they must be parsed at steps 21 and 25. Therefore, the data retrieval method is a specific data retrieval method that involves parsing the documents from their default format into a secondary format (in this case, a semantical graph). Following the specific data retrieval method of receiving and parsing the document, the content of the parsed document is then sorted at steps 22 or 26.

The step of calling a generic data retrieval method if the data items are sortable in their default format is recited as a conditional step, and is thus not necessarily limiting the claim.

Claim 2: The specific data retrieval method involves parsing the default documents 20 and 24 into a secondary format (a semantical graph) which permits the document to be sorted at steps 22 and 26.

Claim 5: Since the generic data retrieval method is recited as conditional, it is not necessarily limiting of the invention. Claim 5, like claim 1, asserts that the generic data retrieval method is conditional and not mandatory.

Claim 7: The sort/reorder functions 22 and 26 requests the data items in their sortable format, which is the parsed format, and is different from their original unparsed format.

Claims 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

10-24

sl Claims 10-22 are allowed.

Remarks

Applicant's arguments have been considered.

Applicant argues that the Baisley reference does not make any distinctions between sortability and non-sortability of data. Examiner maintains that due to the usage of conditional limitations in claim 1, there is no requirement that the prior art illustrate a system that draws a distinction between sortable and non-sortable data.

Examiner finding is based upon the logic of the steps defined in claim 1.

Both of the calling steps in claim 1 are prefaced by an "if" clause. In other words, the step does not occur unless the condition in the "if" clause is met. Since it is possible to perform the complete method by invoking only one of the two "if" clauses, the broadest interpretation of the claim is that it is limited to only one of the two clauses. The claim is not limited to both clauses, since both clauses do not have to be invoked. In fact, the clauses cannot both be invoked because they are opposite to one another.

Given that the Examiner may make the broadest reasonable interpretation of the claim, Examiner's interpretation is that the claim only requires one of the two "if" clauses to be invoked. Since the Baisley reference meets the requirements for one of the two "if" clauses, it meets the broadest reasonable interpretation of claim 1.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Sam Rimell at telephone number (703) 306-5626.



Sam Rimell
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2175